(c) Promotions in ONGC are akin to time bound promotions up to E-4 level and hence no reservation is envisaged. Under this growth oriented promotion policy, all eligible employees who are otherwise fit, are considered for promotion to next higher grades after putting in the specified years of service irrespective of the number of vacancies. Hence no reservation for SC/ST adopted in promotion upto E-4.

There is no reservation in promotion at the level of E-5 and above and this is done strictly on merit cum selection. However certain concession are available in judging merit.

Black marketing of LPG cylinders

3818. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of large scale of black marketing and diversion of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to involve or take co-operation of the general public to curb/check such malpractices;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the initiatives taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) The possibility of black marketing/diversion of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

In order to stop black marketing/diversion of domestic LPG cylinders, the Government has enacted "Liquified Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000" and formulated "Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001" which provides for penal action against LPG distributors indulging in diversion/black marketing of LPG.

Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributor(s) in accordance with the provisions of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG). MDG provides for following action against the distributor:—

- Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.
- Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence.
- Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Governments are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against black marketing/diversion of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measures Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors found black marketing/diversion of LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the black marketing/diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

Government have issued advertisements cautioning the public that use of domestic LPG for non-domestic purposes is illegal, dangerous and against national interest. Through these advertisements, cooperation of the general public has also been sought to report any irregularity/malpractice to the OMCs.

The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributors godowns, delivery points, as well as en-route to ensure that no misuse takes place. The distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to check the weight of cylinders at their godowns before delivery, and only cylinders with the specified weight are to be delivered to the customers. The distributors have also been instructed to ensure that the seals are verified & shown to the customers at the time of delivery. In case any under-weight cylinder is received by the customer, such cylinders are replaced free of charge by the OMCs.

Reports of China joining Pakistan-Iran Pipeline

3819. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to reports of China joining the Pakistan-Iran Gas Pipeline Project in the event of India not joining the project;

(b) whether it is a fact that in the event of India not joining the project, the pipeline is likely to pass through Gilgit, a strategic place in the PoK;

(c) whether Government is aware that the road connecting Pakistan and China and passing through that area is proposed to be widened for the purpose;

(d) if so, whether Government has considered this move; and

(e) if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (e) No official communication has been received in this regard. However, India is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project. Discussions on various important issues concerning the project are underway amongst the participating countries. A Ministerial-level bilateral meeting between India and Pakistan has been held on April 25, 2008 in Islamabad.

Domestic oil production

3820. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent hardening of oil prices close to a stratospheric $ 100 a barrel has once again drawn attention to a pressing issue—India's energy security;

(b) whether the country's import dependence on oil is likely to increase further from an already high figure of approximately 73 per cent;

(c) whether the domestic crude oil production has been practically stagnant at around 33 million tones a year for the last several years; and

(d) to what extent Government is considering these measures so that progress on points should help us move forward in the quest to supply energy to India's rapidly growing economy?